Northeast Montana Weather Summary for the Fall of 2006

September generally featured near normal temperatures and well above normal precipitation. The first half of the month was a continuation of the hot, and in some cases record dry summer. Around the middle of the month the weather abruptly changed, and turned much wetter and colder. Two strong storm systems affected the area. The first, on the 15th through the 17th, and the second on the 21st through the 22nd. The first storm system was accompanied by unusually cold air for so early in the season, and many locations observed their first snowflakes of the season. Several locations north of the Missouri River and across the higher terrain south of the Missouri had accumulating snow. Opheim 12SE measured 3 inches of snow, and even Carlyle 13NW in southern Wibaux County had an inch of snow.

Temperatures were frequently in the 80s the first two weeks of the month, and several locations even had a few days in the 90s. The warmest temperature observed all month was 99 degrees on the 13th at Bredette. Opheim 10N, Opheim 12SE, and Scobey 4NW all had their first freeze of the season during the first few days of the month. Most of the remainder of northeast Montana had to wait until the storm system around the middle of the month for their first freeze of the season. The coldest temperature observed all month was 24 degrees, which was observed on the morning of the 19th at both Opheim 10N and Scobey 4NW.

All of northeast Montana had above normal precipitation in September, due to the two storms around the middle of the month. Each of these storms produced a widespread area of a half an inch to over an inch of rain. By the end of the month, most areas observed between 2 and 3 inches of rain. Carlyle 13NW and Brockton 20S observed the most precipitation, with 4.06 and 4.05 inches respectively. There were a few spots, mainly north of the Missouri that observed less than 2 inches of rain, but even there, totals were a bit above average for September.

October was much colder and wetter than normal. In some areas it was the first month in over a year to feature well below normal temperatures. The month started quite mild with highs in the 70s and even lower 80s the first week of the month. It then turned much colder with temperatures below, and at times even well below normal for much of the remainder of the month. The most significant weather event was an early season winter storm which affected all of northeast Montana from the evening of the 29th through the morning of the 30th. Most of the area received from 2 to 4 inches of snow. The snow was accompanied by strong wind, which produced areas of blowing and drifting snow.

October also featured a cold snap from the 11th through 13th, which sent low temperatures down into the teens, and produced record lows and a very hard freeze. Temperatures did not get as cold again until the first arctic front of the season sent temperatures down into the single digits and in some cases below zero on the morning of the 31st. Jordan 43ENE took the honors with the lowest observed temperature of 2 below on the morning of the 31st, although several locations observed lows near zero. Glendive and Malta both tied for the warmest temperature in October, with both spots recording a high of 84 degrees on the 1st.

Just about all of northeast Montana had well above normal precipitation. Most observation sites reported between three quarters of an inch and 2 inches of liquid precipitation. Brusett observed the most precipitation with 3.12 inches. Most areas were well above average in the snowfall

department, thanks in large part to the snow event late in the month. Carlyle 13NW had the most snowfall during the month, with 10.5 inches. Wibaux 2E was a close second, with 10 inches of snow.

November had both temperatures and precipitation that were close to normal. The month began and ended with well below normal temperatures, but in between there was nearly 3 weeks of mild and relatively dry weather. The cold weather the first few days of the month sent temperatures below zero in spots, with Scobey 4NW reporting a low of 6 below on the morning of the 2nd. Temperatures quickly warmed up on the 4th, with 50s and 60s quite common until late in the month. An arctic airmass dropped into northeast Montana on the 24th, with temperatures dropping well below zero late in the month.

The return to colder weather and the snowfall that accompanied the arctic blast was the weather highlight of the month. Snow on the 24th produced from 2 to 5 inches of snow across portions of Phillips, Valley and Daniels Counties. A more widespread snowfall occurred across all of Northeast Montana from early on the morning of the 28th through the morning of the 29th. Snowfall amounts averaged out to between 2 and 5 inches north of the Missouri, with 1-3 inches south of the Missouri. The snow was accompanied by cold temperatures and strong wind. The strong wind produced considerable drifting snow, and the combination of sub-zero temperatures and the wind produced wind chills of 25 to 40 below zero.

Glendive and Savage had the honors for the warmest temperature observed during the month with a high temperature of 75 degrees on the 7th. Scobey 4NW was yet again the cold spot with a low of 25 below zero on the 26th. Malta and Opheim were not far behind that morning with lows of 23 below zero.

Most areas received between a quarter and half inch of liquid precipitation. Whitewater was the wet spot, with three quarters of an inch. Snowfall was highly variable, but in many areas was either near or above normal. The greatest snowfall totals were observed in Phillips and Valley Counties. Hinsdale 4SW measured 11 inched, with 10 inches observed at Opheim 12SE.